

**Vocabulary List:**

The following vocabulary words are those most likely to be used when students visit Wind Cave National Park. They are included here for use by teachers and/or students. You may want to incorporate them into the spelling curriculum or use them for dictionary work before visiting the park. Offering extra credit for defining the words could be offered. Students should come to Wind Cave National Park with an understanding of these words and concepts.

**acid** – a compound that reacts with a substance by eating or dissolving it away. For example: carbonic acid can dissolve limestone.

**adaptation** - a structure or behavior that enables a plant or animal to live successfully in its environment.

**barometric** - air or atmospheric pressure.

**boxwork** - a speleothem or cave decoration which is a fragile, honeycomb-shaped structure of calcite attached to the walls and ceilings of the cave.

**calcite** - calcium carbonate, the predominate mineral in limestone, found in the cave in a variety of crystalline forms.

**carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>)** - an odorless, colorless gas formed by living or decaying plants and animals; the bubbles in soft drinks.

**carnivore** - a meat eater; an animal that eats only meat.

**carrying capacity** - the number of animals or plants that can live and be healthy in a certain amount of space or land.

**crystal** - the solid form of a substance in which the atoms or molecules are arranged in a definite pattern.

**ecology** - the study of the interrelationships between living things and the relationships between organisms and their physical environment.

**ecosystem** - a living community of plants and animals and the physical environment (oxygen, water, sunlight, soil) around them.

**effect** - to cause, to come into being; anything brought about by a cause.

**environment** - surroundings; all of the conditions surrounding and affecting the development of an organism.

**exotic** - foreign, introduced into an area where it does not naturally occur.

**extinct** - no longer in existence.

**factor** - agent, one that actively contributes to an accomplishment, result or process.

**habitat** - the place where a plant or animal lives.

**herbivore** - a plant-eater; an animal that only eats plants.

**interdependence** - mutual dependence, animals or plants that depend upon each other for survival.

**limestone** - a rock formed of sea sediment consisting mainly of the shells of marine or aquatic animals.

**limiting** - point beyond which something cannot precede; furthest confines, bounds; restriction.

**native** - a plant or animal that occurs in a region naturally.

**niche** - an especially suitable place to live.

**omnivore** - an animal that eats both plants and animals.

**precipitation** - water droplets or ice particles condensed from clouds that fall to the earth's surface in the form of rain or snow.

**predator** - an animal that seizes and kills another animal for food.

**preserve** - to protect from harm or danger; a place where animals and plants are kept for protection.

**prey** - an animal that is seized by a predator.

**protect** - to shield from injury or danger.

**refuge** - a safe place for plants and animals to live.

**speleothem** - a decoration in a cave, for example: boxwork, stalactite or stalagmite.

**stress** - force that exerts or applies pressure.

**survival** - to remain alive or in existence.

**system** - a set or arrangement of things so related as to form a whole.

**water table** - the level or depth in the ground where the rock is completely filled with water and there are no air spaces.